

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The weather has really been kind to us over the past week or so, with temperatures zooming up to a balmy 8-10°, which actually is not quite up to last year at the same time, when the thermometer reached some 18°. We have had a couple of heavy snowfalls, so my plan on having someone take care of clearing the driveway worked out quite well! Not only does he plow, but also will shovel small amounts from around a vehicle parked on the driveway! I reckon it was a good deal.

There have been some letters recently in the American Philatelist on people trying to dispose of a stamp collection or accumulation that belonged to a relative who has passed away. The consensus is mixed, varying from receiving a reasonable settlement to being quoted a ridiculous price from someone who seems to be unscrupulous. My own experience has been pretty good, as I have disposed of several collections for people who had no knowledge of stamps or their value. One or two interesting facts have emerged from these transactions. First, the quality of early material is all important. Substandard examples bring around 5% of catalog – or less. Obviously, better quality means a higher return. Secondly, material post 1940 is for the most part not worth very much. In fact, as far as Canadian material from George VI on, roughly 60% of face value is all that can be hoped for. Many people here, and I would imagine elsewhere, have thought that purchasing mint sheets of regularly issued stamps will bring some return on their investment. The same percentage as quoted above applies to these issues. The holder of a large collection of older material will usually fare best by placing the whole thing with a reputable auction house, although there have been a few horror stories attached to some of those. In my personal opinion, I think it would be smart for any collector to have some thought about his/her collection and take care of disposing of it so as to avoid some relative without any knowledge getting stuck with that job!

We have a new slate of officers, as voted in by the results of our recent ballot – thanks to all those who took time to vote. Our President has pointed out that she is of advancing years and would like to give up the Presidential robes as soon as possible. The same thought has occurred to me from time to time, as I am also approaching the 80's, so if there is any member out there who has a hankering for an editor's job, please let me know.

The National Topical Stamp Show (NTSS) is fast approaching, although I do not have many exhibits as yet. If any member plans on exhibiting, please get your application in soon. I can assure you that the panel of judges will be able to give you valuable advice on how to improve the results obtained for all your hard work. I am just finishing up an exhibit for TEXPEX, so wish me luck!

Until next time - Alan J. Hanks

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